

**Department of State- Embassy of the United States of America in Paraguay  
Notice of Funding Opportunity**

**Program Office:** Public Diplomacy  
**Funding Opportunity Title:** Advanced English language micro-scholarships for academically gifted, disadvantaged high school and undergraduate students in the greater Asuncion metropolitan area of Paraguay.  
**Announcement Type:** Grant or Cooperative Agreement – Initial  
**Funding Opportunity Number:** SPA100-16-GR-005-WHA-06232016  
**Deadline for Applications:** July 30, 2016  
**CFDA** 19.040

**ELIGIBILITY**

Eligibility is limited to not-for-profit organizations subject to 501 (c) (3) of the tax code or similar statutes in the Republic of Paraguay. Direct funding for non-U.S. entities is available under this announcement. Applicants must have either their own classroom facilities with space for groups of up to 25 participants or the ability to rent/lease adequate facilities.

The Embassy of the United States of America in Paraguay encourages organizations that have not previously received international program funding from the U.S. Government to apply under this announcement. New applicants must have a demonstrated expertise in one or more of the following subject areas: teaching ESL/EFL to teens and young adults in a classroom setting with an emphasis on conversational ability, the ability to incorporate U.S. values and culture into the ESL/EFL curriculum, and the provision of report cards and course completion certificates. Expertise and established relationships with the Ministry of Education in Paraguay will be considered favorably.

Cost Sharing or Matching

This program does not require cost sharing but any cost sharing will be looked upon favorably.

Other Special Eligibility Criteria

Not Applicable.

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

- A) For assistance with the requirements of this solicitation, contact **Darren Beltran**, PD Grants and Program Assistant, Public Diplomacy Asuncion, at:  
Email: [educationparaguay@state.gov](mailto:educationparaguay@state.gov)  
Phone: 595-21-213-715

## **CONTENTS**

Executive Summary.....	3
Background.....	3
Eligibility Requirements.....	4
Application and Submission Information.....	5
Award Selection Criteria.....	6
Award Administration.....	8
Disclaimer.....	8

## **I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Embassy of the United States of America in Paraguay's Public Diplomacy (PD) section is pleased to announce a limited competition for assistance awards through this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). PD invites not-for profit/non-governmental organizations in Paraguay to submit proposals for teaching advanced English as a second (ESL) or foreign language (EFL) to groups of up to 25 disadvantaged high school and undergraduate students in the greater Asuncion metropolitan area of Paraguay. ESL/EFL teaching programs should be no more than 2 years in length with a minimum of 4 hours of instruction per week with an emphasis on conversational ability and must incorporate U.S. culture, values, and democratic ideals into the curriculum. Classroom sizes should be between 20-25 students. Public Diplomacy Asuncion will have approximately up to \$25,000 per award.

### **Policy Perspective**

The Public Diplomacy section at the Embassy of the United States of America is seeking to broaden the pool of qualified applicants for the Fulbright program and to increase the number of young Paraguayans with the English skills needed to apply for study at U.S. institutions of higher education. Thus this program will aim to advance Paraguayan students' English language skills and provide them with the necessary preparation to pass the TOEFL. The program will also expose participants to the United States, its culture, values, and democratic ideals while at the same time providing capacity building to young Paraguayan adults with limited opportunities and resources.

## **II. BACKGROUND**

Since 2006 the Public Diplomacy section in collaboration with the American Chamber of Commerce (AMCHAM) in Paraguay has awarded over 1400 English as a second language (ESL) micro-scholarships for beginners and advanced students to outstanding Paraguayan high school and undergraduate students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Many of these participants have had the opportunity to apply for the Fulbright program and programs at U.S. higher education institutions. Opportunities for higher education have further assisted these participants with increasing their economic opportunities and skills to make a positive impact within their communities.

### **Objectives**

The purpose of these awards is to give high-achieving Paraguayan high school and undergraduate university students residing in the greater Asuncion metropolitan area, from financially disadvantaged families, the opportunity to study advanced English as a Second Language (ESL) or advanced English as a foreign language (EFL). This program should provide participants with the level of English language skills needed to apply for undergraduate or graduate studies in the United States. The ESL/EFL courses carried out by the recipient must incorporate U.S. values, culture, and democratic ideals. Proposals should take into account the following:

- Contain a focus on enabling outstanding high school and undergraduate students from disadvantaged backgrounds the opportunity to gain advanced English language skills with an emphasis on conversational ability.
- Include an element that exposes participants to U.S. culture, values, and democratic ideals through focused inclusion in the ESL/EFL course curriculum.
- Be open to the possibility of engaging participants through follow on Public Diplomacy activities and programs.
- Class sizes of between 20-25 students when possible.
- Contain an ESL/EFL course of instruction for young adults, starting with the advanced intermediate and finishing at the advanced level with an emphasis on preparing to pass the TOEFL exam.
- Include a minimum of 4 hours of instruction per week.
- Classes up to twice per week.
- The program should preferably last less than 2 years.
- Reporting on grades and progress for every level to the Grants Officer or the Grants Officer Representative at the U.S. Embassy in Paraguay.
- The grant or cooperative award Recipient will be required to assist with the pre-selection of applications and interviews of participants for this “Advanced ESL micro-scholarship program”.
- The grant or cooperative agreement Recipient will be required to organize and hold a ceremony for awarding the advanced micro-scholarships to participants.
- The grant or cooperative agreement Recipient will be required to organize and hold a graduation ceremony with certificates for program participants.

### **Funding Priorities**

Public Diplomacy Asuncion seeks to fund only those programs that enable participants to gain an advanced level of English skills through a course of study with duration of up to two years with a focus on preparing for the TOEFL exam. Only those programs focused on the greater Asuncion metropolitan area will be considered.

### **III. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

Eligibility is limited to not-for-profit organizations subject to 501 (c) (3) of the tax code or to similar statutes in the Republic of Paraguay. Direct funding for non-U.S. institutions is available under this announcement. The Department of State encourages organizations that have not previously received international program funding from the USG to apply under this announcement (see “Eligibility” on page 1).

Applicants are not required to include funding from other donors. However, applications that include additional in-kind and/or cash contributions from non-U.S. Government sources will be more competitive, since cost-sharing demonstrates a strong commitment to the planned activities and will be considered to show great cost effectiveness. There may also be additional funding from the private sector to include additional participants in the program.

#### IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

**Award Period:** Up to 27 months

**Award Amount:** A maximum amount per award of \$25,000 is available under this program.

**Application Submission Process:** Applicants must submit grants proposals electronically to [educationparaguay@state.gov](mailto:educationparaguay@state.gov). For questions about this solicitation, contact Darren Beltran, Grants and Program Assistant, at:

Email: [educationparaguay@state.gov](mailto:educationparaguay@state.gov) (*Preferred method of communication*)

Phone: 595-21-213-715

**Application Deadline:** All applications must be submitted on or before July 30, 2016, 11:59 p.m. eastern time. Applications submitted after 11:59 p.m. will be ineligible for consideration. **Begin the application process early**, as this will allow time to address any technical difficulties that may arise in advance of the deadline. There will be no exceptions to this application deadline.

All applicants must: (1) Obtain a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet (if your organization does not have one already) by calling 1-866-705-5711; (2) Register with System for Awards Management (SAM) data base; Please note that your SAM registration must be renewed annually. Failure to renew your SAM registration may prohibit submission of a grant application through Grants.gov.

**Application Content:** Applicants must follow the NOFO instructions and conditions contained herein and supply all information required. **Failure to furnish all information or comply with stated requirements will result in disqualification from the competition.** Applicants must set forth full, accurate, and complete information as required by this RFP. The penalty for making false statements in proposals to the USG is prescribed on 18 U.S.C.1001.

Grant proposals may not exceed 4 double-spaced pages in 12-point, Times New Roman font with 1-inch margins. This requirement excludes the allowable appendices, which are identified in Section 6 below. Organizations are permitted to submit multiple grant proposals, but should be aware that PD seeks to provide opportunities to as many organizations as possible. The proposal must consist of the following:

##### **Section 1 - Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424):**

This form can be found on-line at:

[Http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/forms/sample/SF424\\_2\\_1-V2.1.pdf](http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/forms/sample/SF424_2_1-V2.1.pdf).

**Section 2 - Abstract:**

The abstract is limited to 300 words in length. It must provide a summary of the identified need, proposed activities, and expected results.

**Section 3 - Problem Statement:**

The problem statement must describe the need for the project, with regards to: location, limited opportunities for potential participants to acquire advanced English skills elsewhere, and the impact that acquiring advanced English language skills will have on the participants.

**Section 4 – Project Goals/Implementation Plan:**

The applicant must specify the goals and objectives of the project, relative to the problem statement. The proposed activities should be described in sufficient detail to show how objectives and goals will be met. This section should also describe how success will be measured via performance indicators. Finally, this section must include a time-task plan that clearly identifies the objectives and major activities.

**Section 5 - Organizational Capability:**

Applications must include a clear description of the applicant's management structure, previous experience with advanced ESL/EFL teaching programs, and organizational experience and background in Paraguay as these relate to the proposed activities. Besides information about the organization as a whole, this section must also identify the proposed management structure and staffing plan for the proposed project.

**Section 6 - Appendices:**

The grant proposal submission must include two appendices. Only the appendices listed below may be included as part of the application:

- (a) **Budget (Required)** – the budget must identify the total amount of funding requested, with a breakdown of amounts to be spent in the following budget categories: personnel; fringe benefits; travel; equipment; supplies; consultants/contracts; other direct costs; and indirect costs. The budget may not exceed 1 page in length, and may include an estimated cost for continuation activities, which will be considered for successful applicants to this NOFO in future fiscal years based on performance and the availability of funds.
- (b) **Resume (Required)** – a resume, not to exceed 1 page in length, must be included for the proposed key staff person, such as the academic coordinator or head teacher. If an individual for this type of position has not been identified, the applicant may submit a 1-page position description, identifying the qualifications and skills required for that position, in lieu of a resume.

**V. AWARD SELECTION CRITERIA**

Consistent with the federal grant regulations, the Department of State reserves the right to give priority for its funds to promote advanced English teaching in Paraguay to those

organizations working on key USG objectives that are and have been supportive, in policy and programs, of USG policies for advanced English teaching programs in Paraguay.

**Evaluation Criteria:** Applicants should note that the following criteria (1) serve as a standard against which all proposals will be evaluated, and (2) serve to identify the significant matters that should be addressed in all proposals. The USG will award a grant or cooperative agreement to the applicants whose offer represents the best value to the USG on the basis of technical merit and cost.

Each application will be evaluated by a Grants committee at the Embassy of the United States of America in Paraguay. The evaluation criteria have been tailored to the requirements of this NOFO.

- **Problem Statement (25 points):** This section should identify the importance and relevance of the applicant's proposal to increasing higher educational and employment opportunities of underprivileged participants.
- **Project Goals/Implementation Plan (40 points):** Applicants should describe what they propose to do and how they will do it. The proposed activities must directly relate to meeting the goals and objectives, and applicants should include information on how they will measure activities' effectiveness. The Grants committee will be viewing the implementation plan in terms of how well it addresses the problem statement, relevance of the goals and objectives, feasibility of the proposed activities and their timeline for completion, and the extent to which the impact of the project will continue beyond the conclusion of the funding period.
- **Organizational Capability (20 points):** Proposals should demonstrate the ability to develop and implement advanced ESL/EFL teaching programs. Applicants must demonstrate how their resources, capabilities, and experience will enable them to achieve the stated goals and objectives. In addition, applicants should describe how and with whom they will collaborate to meet project goals.
- **Appendices (15 points):**
  - **Budget:** Costs shall be evaluated for realism, control practices, and efficiency. The Department of State must determine that the costs paid for this award are reasonable, allowable, and allocable to the proposed project activities. This will consist of a review of the Budget to determine if the overall costs are realistic for the work to be performed, and if the costs are consistent with the program narrative.
  - **Resume:** The Grants committee will consider the appropriateness of the selected project director; in view of the role and responsibility that person will play in guiding the project through implementation to completion.

Position descriptions submitted in lieu of the resume will be reviewed for the appropriateness of the qualifications and skills identified.

## **VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

**Award Notices:** The grant award or cooperative agreement shall be written, signed, awarded, and administered by the Grants Officer. The Grants Officer is the Government official delegated the authority by the U.S. Department of State Procurement Executive to write, award, and administer grants and cooperative agreements. The assistance award agreement is the authorizing document and it will be provided to the Recipient through either mail or facsimile transmission. Organizations whose applications will not be funded will also be notified in writing.

**Anticipated Time to Award:** Applicants should expect to be notified of the *recommended* concepts within 15 working days after the submission deadline.

Issuance of this NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government, nor does it commit the Government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals. Further, the Government reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received.

- **Reporting Requirements:** Grantees are required to submit quarterly program progress and financial reports throughout the project period. Progress and financial reports are due 30 days after the reporting period. Final programmatic and financial reports are due 90 days after the close of the project period. Progress reports at a minimum should be submitted via electronic mail to an address to be provided in the award.

## **VII. DISCLAIMER**

If a proposal is selected for funding, the Department of State has no obligation to provide any additional future funding in connection with the award. Renewal of an award to increase funding or extend the period of performance is at the total discretion of the Department of State.